



***“Safer communities through successful youth”***

# **ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE CORRECTIONS**

**5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN  
FY 2006 – FY 2010**

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**MISSION**

The Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections enhances public protection by assisting in the changing of delinquent thinking and behaviors of juvenile offenders committed to the Department.

**VISION**

Safer communities through successful youth

**DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION**

The Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC) is the state agency responsible for juveniles adjudicated delinquent and committed to its jurisdiction by the county juvenile courts. ADJC is accountable to the citizens of Arizona for the promotion of public safety through the management of the state's secure juvenile facilities and the provision of a continuum of services to juvenile offenders, including rehabilitation, treatment, and education designed to change their delinquent thinking and behavior.

**GOALS**

ADJC has five goals.

**Goal 1:** ADJC will provide a safe environment for all youth under its supervision.

**Goal 2:** ADJC will recruit, reward, and retain a competent workforce that successfully meets the diverse needs of youth and families.

**Goal 3:** ADJC will encourage youth, families, and communities to work together to achieve success for youth.

**Goal 4:** ADJC will foster an environment for committed youth to achieve on-going law abiding attitudes and behaviors.

**Goal 5:** ADJC will cause committed youth to contribute to the restoration of victims and communities they have harmed.

**STRATEGIC ISSUES**

Over the next five years, ADJC's strategic plan anticipates four major strategic issues. Each of these larger issues poses operational challenges which are addressed by the Strategies outlined in the next section.

**Transformation of Department**

ADJC is a relatively new agency, but its historic roots run deep. In 1997 ADJC completed an ambitious reform effort. Today, ADJC is embarking on a new round of reforms in response to concerns raised by the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). In September 2004 the State of Arizona and the DOJ arrived at a settlement agreement which resulted in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The anticipated reforms will include a number of changes designed to improve safety and security, to significantly improve ADJC's ability to manage suicidal risk and to improve services to youth.

In order for reform efforts to be successful, change must come from within. Change must start with dedicated staff committed to the Department's goals and objectives. While ADJC has very dedicated staff, the Department also continues to suffer one of the highest turn-over rates in Arizona State government. In FY 2004, ADJC's Department-wide turn-over rate was 28.2%. This rate was driven by ADJC's Youth Correctional Officer (YCO) staff. In FY 2004, YCO I positions had a turn-over rate of 42.8%. YCO I positions represent 23% of the Department's total positions.

This crushingly high rate of turn-over among entry-level staff has several important consequences for the Department.

First, high turn-over limits ADJC's effectiveness in providing committed youth with a safe environment and the treatment they need to become successful citizens. Changing the lives of the most difficult youth in Arizona's juvenile justice system requires a great deal of skill and knowledge. Those traits are gained and honed through experience. ADJC's current turn-over rate prevents most entry-level staff from developing the proficiency necessary to be highly effective with youth.

Secondly, high turn-over rates are an expensive and inefficient use of resources. In addition to the costs of recruiting new staff, ADJC must invest substantially in

training for new staff. Before working with youth, each newly recruited Youth Corrections Officer attends a 7-week pre-service academy. While costly, this training is extremely important to equip staff with the basic knowledge needed to safely work within ADJC's facilities. The Department's high turn-over rate means that this investment in training is essentially wasted on many staff each year. In addition, high turn-over generally equates to high vacancy rates, which must be covered by costly overtime.

#### Department Transformation – Performance Measures

	Fiscal Year		
	2003	2004	2005
% of staff indicating satisfaction with their jobs	59	51	65
YCO I Turn-Over Rate	49%	43%	18%

In addition to dedicated staff, ADJC must have well defined systems and standards designed to hold both youth and staff accountable. Currently, ADJC has several disjointed efforts that lack consistent department-wide implementation resulting in each unit or facility determining what is "best". In order to consistently hold both youth and staff accountable, ADJC must unite monitoring systems and standards and implement a total quality assurance and inspections program that conducts regular comprehensive audits by qualified professionals of relevant programs monitoring compliance with department-wide policies and procedures. Since the Quality Assurance and Inspection Program is in the early development performance measures have not been finalized.

#### Youth with Increased Clinical Needs

The Department has seen a significant shift in the of type youth committed. Over the last three years, the needs assessments of incoming youth have shown an increasing prevalence of "special needs." For example:

- **Mental Health Needs** – The proportion of youth with mental health problems resulting in "exhibiting excessive responses which prohibit or severely limit adequate functioning, including clear diagnosis of problems such as depression, anxiety, psychosis, and suicidal gestures" increased 8 percentage points in two years from 32% in FY 2001 to 40% in FY 2003.
- **Violent Offenders** – The percentage of ADJC's population exhibiting a history of violent behavior has increased more than 300% from 6.9% in FY 2000 to 28.0% in FY 2003.
- **Sex Offenders** – The percentage of youth assessed as using "sexual behaviors to attain power and control over others, harming and/or instilling fear in the victim" increased 200%, from 3.2% in FY 2000 to 9.6% in FY 2003.

- **Substance Abuse** – The percentage of ADJC's population with a history of serious drug or alcohol abuse increased from 70.9% to 76.5% between FY 2000 and FY 2003.

These changes in the type of youth committed to ADJC have resulted in three operational challenges which must be addressed:

#### 1. Difficulty Meeting the Needs of Youth

Unlike adult inmates who are criminally sentenced, juvenile offenders are civilly committed to ADJC for the purpose of treating their delinquency. This fundamental difference between the juvenile and adult correctional systems results in higher standards for treatment under federal law for juvenile corrections.

On January 23, 2004, a letter from the U.S. Department of Justice was received by Governor Janet Napolitano. The investigation culminated in numerous findings, which focused on five main issue areas: suicide prevention, juvenile justice, education, medical care and mental health. As result, in April 2004 a Deputy Director was hired to oversee operations. In addition, in August 2004 a Clinical Director was hired to integrate medical and mental health services and treatment.

ADJC's current operations do not provide enough direct line and case management staff in housing units to meet the more extensive needs of many youth. Currently, ADJC maintains a 2-3-1 direct line staffing pattern. For a 24 bed unit, ADJC has two line staff on the 1<sup>st</sup> shift (1:12), three on the 2<sup>nd</sup> shift (1:8) and one on the 3<sup>rd</sup> shift (1:24). DOJ Monitors recommend a 2-3-2 line staffing pattern. In order to meet this direct line staffing pattern, ADJC would have to add an additional FTE to the 3<sup>rd</sup> shift.

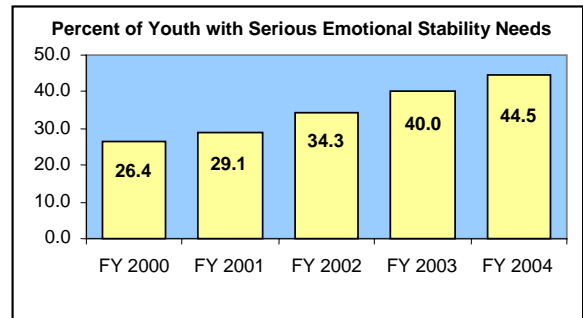
Also contained in MOA are more specific content requirements of youth treatment plans. As a result, youth treatment plans will require additional case management responsibilities. Currently, ADJC's caseworker to youth ratio is 1:12. Based on the anticipated increased case management and group counseling responsibilities imposed by the DOJ, the Department anticipates that more realistic caseworker to youth ratio should be 1:8. In addition, the DOJ requires a more structured and comprehensive treatment programs. This Continuum of Services is a structured decision-making process for youth committed to ADJC and will determine appropriate secure housing, treatment programs, supervision levels, and community placement of youth based on goals of the Department.

In addition, the current number of special treatment beds available is far from meeting the need. For example:

- **Mental Health** – Mentally ill youth require much higher levels of supervision, health care, psychotropic medication, and other forms of treatment to safely function. Anecdotally, ADJC is often seen as the only alternative for mentally ill youth in need of a secure setting as the Arizona State Hospital maintains only 16 juvenile beds. In FY 2003, ADJC received 318 youth with serious mental health or emotional stability needs. ADJC is currently funded for 46 mental health beds. This is clearly insufficient.
- **Violent Offender** – In FY 2003, ADJC received 210 youth who were assessed to “use violent behavior to attain power and control over others.” ADJC currently has 45 violent offender beds.
- **Sex Offender** – In FY 2003, ADJC received 72 youth who were assessed to “use sexual behaviors to attain power and control over others, harming and/or instilling fear in the victim.” ADJC currently has 38 sex offender beds to treat these youth.
- **Substance Abuse** – By far, the most common special treatment need among youth committed to ADJC is a history of substance abuse. In FY 2003, 573 youth with serious alcohol or drug abuse problems were committed to the Department. Currently, ADJC has only one substance abuse special treatment bed per four youth needing treatment.

ADJC recidivism research has found a strong statistical correlation between youth with substance abuse needs, mental health needs, or a history of violent behavior and recidivism. For example, a study of 3,624 youth released between 1996 and 1999 found that youth with substance abuse problems had recidivism rates 2% higher than those without a history of substance abuse.

#### More Difficult Youth – Performance Measure



#### 2. Juvenile Suicide

Between April 2002 and April 2003, ADJC had three youth commit suicide. These represent the first successful suicides in the Department's 13-year history. National research has shown a significant increase in youth suicides in recent years. Arizona has been disproportionately impacted by this trend and exceeds the national average.

Further, research has shown that youth in correctional settings are at even greater risk for suicide. One reason for this increased suicide risk is the high number of juveniles with mental and emotional problems. As noted above, the proportion of youth committed to ADJC with serious emotional problems is increasing. ADJC must, therefore, address these risks.

In the MOA, DOJ outlined several areas ADJC needed to address regarding suicide prevention. These areas included staff training, youth identification and screening and physical plant hazards. DOJ acknowledged that ADJC has designed and implemented a suicide prevention training curriculum. Furthermore, DOJ acknowledged that ADJC has extensively revised its suicide prevention policies and procedures. While DOJ was satisfied with the physical plant renovations to date, they acknowledged the need to complete the renovations during FY 2006.

#### 3. Medical Care

In the MOA, DOJ states that ADJC shall ensure that youth in the facilities receive adequate, appropriate and timely medical, dental, and nursing care to meet the individualized needs of youth. Furthermore, it states that there needs to be a sufficient number of trained nursing staff on all three shifts. Currently, ADJC is funded for two shifts of nursing staff.

#### Education

ADJC believes two legal mandates will have important impacts on the Department's operations over the next five years.

1. Education Program Statutory Compliance  
 Special Education – ADJC is required to provide services to youth with disabilities as mandated by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §15-761, and A.R.S. §15-765 through §15-767. These services include delivery of special education instruction, speech/language services, occupation and physical therapy, and evaluation services for special education eligibility. In December 2001, an audit of ADJC's compliance with IDEA requirements found that ADJC was failing to adequately identify youth who are eligible for special education services. Since that time, ADJC has worked to bring its "Child Find" process into IDEA compliance, resulting in a near doubling of ADJC's special education population. In FY 2002, special education students made up 23% of total ADJC enrollment. Upon attaining full IDEA Child Find compliance, that proportion has increased to 45%. This compares with a statewide special education average of 11% of total enrollment.

Due to the dramatic over-representation of special education students within ADJC's school system, the Department struggles to meet its legal responsibilities for these youth. ADJC's school district is currently staffed at a uniform 1 teacher per 14 students. A DOJ audit of Louisiana's juvenile education system led to a settlement requiring a special education teacher to student ratio of 1:6. A similar settlement with Georgia's juvenile corrections agency required a ratio of 1:12. Based on these findings, ADJC special education staffing is inadequate.

Section 504 Accommodations – Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires schools to make accommodations for persons with physical or mental impairments which limit "a major life activity." As learning is defined as a major life activity, any youth who has demonstrated difficulty learning qualifies for reasonable accommodations to assist them. Given that 94% of ADJC youth have dropped out, been expelled, or were exhibiting serious truancy or school behavioral problems at the time of their commitment, it is conservatively estimated that 50% – 60% of ADJC youth will qualify for educational accommodations under Section 504. ADJC's current funding does not permit the Department to make these accommodations.

#### Education – Performance Measure

	Fiscal Year		
	2003	2004	2005
% of Special Education Youth	35	45	45

**STRATEGIES**

The strategies listed below address both the Department's strategic issues and ADJC's five goals. Resource assumptions are listed following strategies where applicable. Funding sources are abbreviated as follows: General Fund (GF) and other appropriated funds (OF). All amounts are shown in thousands. Each fiscal year represents incremental changes from FY 2005.

**Continuum of Services**

ADJC's most important strategy for improving recidivism rates for the increasingly difficult youth committed to the Department is to improve the Department's system for providing individualized treatment to youth. ADJC refers to this improved system as "Continuum of Services." Continuum of Services is a structured decision-making process for youth committed to ADJC and will determine appropriate secure housing, treatment programs, supervision levels, and community placement of youth based on the goals of the department.

Recently the Reception, Assessment and Classification (RAC) process has been revamped and expanded. Youth will complete a more extensive diagnostic assessment process. This process will identify the risk factors causing or contributing to the juvenile's delinquent behavior and protective factors that support non-delinquent behavior using three specific assessment tools:

- **Community Risk Assessment:** A statistically validated instrument that calculates the likelihood of re-offending in the community based on criminal and social factors
- **Criminogenic and Protective Factors Assessment:** A motivational interview and assessment adapted from the State of Washington that targets youth risks and strengths
- **Strategies for Juvenile Supervision:** An assessment designed to provide a case management strategy for those who work with juvenile offenders in the community and institutional settings

The greater depth and accuracy of this assessment information will allow ADJC to provide more individualized treatment to youth starting when they arrive in RAC and continuing through their community integration and discharge. In addition, ADJC is defining strategies to support Child and Family Teams promoting family integration starting with the RAC process and continuing through community programs.

As noted in the Strategic Issues section, ADJC currently operates a relatively small pool or special

treatment housing units focusing on mental health, substance abuse, sex offender, or violent offender treatment. The bulk of the Department's housing units provide a more general form of treatment. Research has shown that, despite the fact that ADJC's most difficult youth are assigned to special treatment housing units, youth from these units have recidivism rates 4 percentage points below peers from general housing units. This equates to recidivism rates that are 15% lower.

Continuum of Services will allow the Department to tailor all of its housing units and community programs to provide specialized treatment for the criminogenic needs (i.e. needs that drive criminal behavior) of youth.

In summary, Continuum of Services will increase the safety of citizens, staff, and juveniles by:

- A more scientific targeting of treatment services based on a juvenile's risk and protective factors to provide an effective risk management strategy for delinquent youth
- Improving individualized approaches, ensuring a culturally appropriate and language proficient treatment plan for all youth
- Optimizing the use of ADJC resources by allowing the Department to focus on the highest risk youth
- Reinforcing the development of youth and system accountability through quality management techniques

In order to implement Continuum of Services and provide adequate youth supervision and case management, ADJC will have to increase staffing requirements. The increase in staffing requirements will ensure 2-3-2 direct line staffing providing youth supervision and support a caseworker to youth ratio of 1:8. In addition, ADJC will implement a plan to provide adequate treatment material to youth and provide adequate clinical training to staff.

Fiscal Year	Continuum of Services				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
FTE	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.0
GF	3,065.8	3,065.8	3,065.8	3,065.8	3,065.8

**Suicide Resistant Facilities**

One critical strategy to prevent suicides within ADJC facilities is to make youth rooms more suicide resistant. Following the first of the Department's suicides, ADJC brought four teams of expert consultants into its facilities to evaluate every aspect of the Department's suicide prevention system.

These evaluations highlighted the fact that ADJC's facilities were not constructed with suicide prevention in mind. As a result, they provide numerous opportunities to secure a sheet, blanket, trouser leg, or t-shirt as a ligature for asphyxiation. Reducing the number of such opportunities requires significant renovation.

Based on the expert's recommendations, in FY 2003 and FY 2004, ADJC took advantage of a decline in its juvenile population to conduct \$1.6 million in suicide prevention renovations. In addition, ADJC was funded \$501.5K in FY 2005 to continue its efforts to improve physical plant suicide resistance across all facilities. These changes included replacing unsafe beds, desks, shelves, air vents, toilets, sinks, and door and window hardware. Initially, the Department focused these changes on the housing units serving the highest risk populations – mental health treatment units, reception and assessment units, and substance abuse treatment units. During FY 2004, ADJC continued to focus physical plant suicide improvements in the substance abuse units and separation. At this time, over 48% of ADJC housing units have been renovated to improve their suicide safety.

Completing suicide prevention renovations for all housing units will require an additional \$1.1 million in FY 2006.

Suicide Resistant Facilities					
Fiscal Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
FTE	0	0	0	0	0
GF	1,053.7	0	0	0	0

### Medical Staffing

Currently ADJC operates a medical unit at each facility staffed with Registered Nurses for two shifts (morning and swing). In order to comply with the DOJ agreement, the Department is required to add a graveyard registered nurse shift to each facility.

Medical Staffing					
Fiscal Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
FTE	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
GF	319.2	319.2	319.2	319.2	319.2

### Education Staffing

Special Education – ADJC's schools are currently staffed to provide one teacher for every 14 youth. DOJ

audits in other states have established the following minimum staffing ratios:

	Special Ed	Regular Ed
Louisiana	1:6	1:17
Georgia	1:12	1:15

ADJC believes a staffing ratio of 1:8 would best meet the needs of youth. In FY 2006, these changes would result in a net need for an additional 27 Teacher FTE positions. In addition, the MOA specifies that ADJC must provide school psychologist services to youth. This was initially funded in FY 2005 and requires an additional school psychologist FTE position in FY 2006.

Section 504 Accommodations – It is conservatively estimated that 50% – 60% of ADJC youth will qualify for educational accommodations under Section 504. ADJC was funded for 5 Section 504 Coordinators in FY 2005. These positions will be filled by January 2005. Since Section 504 is very broad and ADJC has no experience with its interpretation, ADJC will be working with the DOJ monitors for the implementation of these statutes. A plan should be completed by May 2005.

Education Staffing					
Fiscal Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
FTE	28.0	28.0	28.0	28.0	28.0
GF	1,187.6	1,187.6	1,187.6	1,187.6	1,187.6

### Recruitment and Training of Staff

YCOs are asked to perform a number of different roles. Working with the difficult and often violent youth committed to the Department requires security knowledge and vigilance. Unlike most adult correctional systems, however, the focus of ADJC's activity is rehabilitative programming. Most of this programming is delivered by YCOs. As a result, YCOs must simultaneously act as a correctional officer, counselor, parent, and teacher for 24 to 32 teens. It is an extremely demanding, and sometimes dangerous job. Recruiting staff that relish and excel at this work is the key to improving ADJC's staff retention rate.

In the past, a growing youth population and high turn-over rates caused the Department to focus its recruiting efforts on attracting a high volume of candidates. The Department's current decline in population has provided an opportunity to practice more targeted recruiting.

ADJC's Research and Development Section is working with facility leaders to identify and profile staff with exceptional performance and commitment. This information will then be used to target the Department's recruitment efforts on attracting similar staff. ADJC

believes these efforts will yield a significant increase in the Department's retention of staff.

Recruiting improvements will be made using existing resources.

Throughout the MOA, DOJ calls for the Department to provide adequate training for staff at all levels of the organization. Prior to FY 2005, ADJC was not funded for a Pre-Service Academy. As a result, a position had to be vacant in the facility to provide the funding required for a cadet in the Pre-Service Academy. Obviously, this caused ADJC to lag behind when hiring direct care staff. This created staff shortages in the facilities and unnecessary overtime. Because of the volatile work schedules and unrealistic overtime, new employees quickly "burned out" resulting in a very high turnover rate. Currently, ADJC averages about 6 academies per year with about 20 cadets. In FY 2005, ADJC was funded for half the cadet FTEs needed with the intent that the additional FTEs would be funded during FY 2006.

In addition, ADJC must provide In-Service training for all staff. As a result of the DOJ investigation, ADJC has determined that several gaps exist in the In-Service training plan. Specifically, ADJC must provide In-Service training for suicide prevention, adolescent development, behavior management and crisis intervention, intake screening and assessment and medical care for direct care staff. In order for facility housing unit staff to complete these additional training requirements, overtime hours will have to be used to maintain housing unit staffing ratios. ADJC must find a solution to fund the additional required in-service training hours without jeopardizing housing unit staffing ratios.

Fiscal Year	Training Requirements				
	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
FTE	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
GF	767.9	767.9	767.9	767.9	767.9

### Competitive Compensation

In July 2004, ADJC's Research and Development Division conducted a salary survey of Correction and Detention Officers in Arizona and other western states. The purpose of this survey was to compare starting salaries and minimum requirements for juvenile corrections officers. The report includes survey data for twenty agencies. ADJC's YCO starting salary is \$25,198.

When compared to detention officers in Arizona:

- Detention officers in Maricopa (\$430,576), Yavapai (\$27,914) and Pima (\$27,160) counties provide higher starting salaries than ADJC.

- Maricopa County, where three of ADJC's facilities are located, provide a starting salary which is \$5,378 more than ADJC.

When compared to other state departments of juvenile corrections:

- ADJC's YCOs trailed the median starting salary for juvenile correctional officers in the nine states surveyed. The median starting salary was \$26,507; a difference of \$1,307.
- ADJC's YCOs ranked seventh out of ten western or southwestern states in entry-level pay.

It is important to note that 40% of survey respondents indicated that plans currently exist to increase the minimum starting salary for juvenile correctional or detention officers in their agencies.

These salary differences make it very difficult for the Department to compete for and retain quality staff. With these numbers in mind and in order to remain competitive with other agencies in attracting and retaining qualified YCO staff, ADJC would like to increase YCO salaries \$4,500 per FTE position. Over the next two years, ADJC will work to bring the salary of its staff to parity with their county detention peers.

Fiscal Year	Competitive Compensation				
	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
FTE					
GF	3,751.2	3,751.2	3,751.2	3,751.2	3,751.2

### Quality Assurance

In the MOA, DOJ outlines a Quality Assurance Program that includes comprehensive audits by qualified professionals at the facilities to monitor compliance with the department's policies and procedures. A comprehensive audit in each programming area shall include:

- Review of relevant documents for both adequacy of documentation and for quality of services.
- Interviews with relevant staff, including administrators.
- Interviews with youth.
- Observation of relevant activities.



- Steps to determine if youth are receiving relevant services.
- Written findings and the development of corrective actions.
- Review of the adequacy of each facilities internal quality assurance activities.
- Regular unannounced site visits.
- Monitoring and review of serious incidents' incidents of use of force and use of separation in excess of 24 hours.
- Analysis of data to measure compliance with policies and procedures.
- Regular reports at least once every 6 months summarizing quality assurance activities, findings, and recommendations.
- Assure the implementation and adequacy of the educational, medical and mental health quality assurance programs.

FY 2005, ADJC received funding for 3 FTE positions to ensure an effective quality assurance program. In March 2004, ADJC created an Inspections Unit. Then in October 2004, ADJC hired a Quality Assurance Program Coordinator. These two individuals will work together to create and implement a written quality assurance program. It is anticipated that while this is a critical strategy for future development, a quality assurance program can be implemented using existing resources.

## RESOURCE ASSUMPTION SUMMARY

	<b>FY 2006 Request</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>Incremental Cost of Strategies</b>		<b>FY 2010</b>
			<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	
FTEs	121.5	121.5	121.5	121.5	121.5
General Fund	10,145.4	9,091.7	9,091.7	9,091.7	9,091.7
Other					
Appropriated	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Funds	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Appropriated	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10,145.4	9,091.7	9,091.7	9,091.7	9,091.7
in thousands					